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SOME TYPICAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF ENGLISH SOCIOLOGY TO POLITICAL THEORY

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ABSTRACT

Trotter for the first time made clear the great sociological importance of the gregarious tendencies of man, and indicated the necessity of controlling and guiding the operation of "herd instinct" by means of the social will and intelligence.

V. WILFRED TROTTER AND THE SOCIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE RECOGNITION AND CONTROL OF "HERD INSTINCT"

1. *Significance of Trotter's contribution to political psychology.*—The dominant note in recent English psychological sociology has been an attack upon the earlier intellectualistic theories which were characteristic of the period of the contract theory and were later revived in a different application by the Utilitarians. This tendency has been characteristic of most of the psychological interpretations of society offered in recent times not only in England but also on the Continent and in America. Bagehot had been the harbinger of this trend in his emphasis upon the importance of the non-intellectual factor of imitation in social processes. One of the most suggestive and profound expositions of this modern tendency to emphasize the instinctive and emotional aspects of the psychic factors in society is to be found in two essays by Dr. Wilfred Trotter, a noted English surgeon whose sociological interests have been revealed to readers of the *Sociological Papers* and the *Sociological Review* through his discussions at meetings of the English Sociological Society. The first essay is entitled, "Herd Instinct and Its Bearing upon the Psychology of Civilized Man,"¹ and the second, "Sociological Applications of the Psychology of Herd Instinct."² Aside from their emphasis upon the non-rational basis of human conduct, these essays are extremely note-

¹ *Sociological Review* (1908), pp. 227-48.

² *Ibid.* (1909), pp. 36-54.

worthy, since they question seriously the unqualified assertion of many sociologists that the social instinct has been the basic factor in human progress. Ever since Aristotle uttered his famous, aphorism, the majority of social philosophers and social scientists, with a few exceptions like Machiavelli and Hobbes, have viewed the social instinct as the basis of all of human achievement, and any question as to its beneficent action has been looked upon as almost irreverent. But now Dr. Trotter appears as a sort of psychological Malthus and questions the accuracy of this assertion, as Malthus questioned the eighteenth-century ideas of the perfectability of man. While Dr. Trotter admits the value of the gregarious instinct as an indispensable factor in human progress, he also detects certain detrimental influences radiating from it which seem capable of eliminating man from the planet as another of Nature's failures unless this instinct is consciously guided and directed by intellect. Important as are Dr. Trotter's conclusions, they had escaped the notice of most sociologists, at least up to the time of their republication in book form.¹

Of course, Trotter's basic premise of the constraining influence which is exerted over the individual by the group is not new, having been long ago elaborated by Bagehot and Durkheim, and much more extensively developed in Professor Sumner's work on *Folkways* which appeared just before Dr. Trotter's essays. The novel element in Dr. Trotter's treatment is rather his profound psychological analysis of the nature and influence of the herd instinct and his highly original and all-important deductions which he draws from this analysis. To put the situation briefly Trotter gives a profound psychological interpretation and explanation of the phenomenon of social constraint, the practical operation of which Sumner has so thoroughly described. Important for

¹ Mr. Graham Wallas in the preface to his *Human Nature in Politics*, expressed a hope that he might carry his psychological analysis on the same high level of accuracy and insight which had been displayed by Dr. Trotter, and Professor Ellwood, in his *Sociology in Its Psychological Aspects*, pauses to call attention to Trotter's first essay as one of the best recent sociological treatments of gregariousness (*op. cit.*, p. 220). Aside from these writers Dr. Trotter's important conclusions seem for a decade to have passed unnoticed by the sociologists, and have been utilized only by the abnormal psychologists. See the breezy but penetrating review of Trotter's doctrine by J. H. Robinson, *Political Science Quarterly*, 1917, pp. 315-19.

political science is his view of the psychological derivation of public opinion, political parties, political opinions, and the spirit of conservatism. The following are the main points presented in these highly stimulating essays.

2. *The nature and derivation of herd instinct.*—In the first place, Trotter lays down the law that modern psychology must always start from the assumption that man is social, since isolated man is unknown.¹ He next turns to an investigation of the psychology of instinctive behavior. An instinctive impulse he finds to be one which “reveals itself to human consciousness as an axiomatically obvious proposition as something which is so clearly ‘sense’ that any idea of discussing its basis is foolish or wicked.”² The primary instincts of self-preservation, nutrition, and sex have been found insufficient to account for all the observed varieties and characteristics of human conduct. This gap is only supplied when one accepts the existence and operation of a gregarious instinct, into whatever components it may be analyzed, as the necessary fourth instinct to explain the difficulties and omissions which would otherwise arise. That gregariousness has had a very high survival value in the evolution of the animal kingdom is to be inferred from the fact that it is the most universal characteristic of the animal world. The whole history of man’s physical and mental evolution indicates the fact that he has evolved as a gregarious animal.³

After this preliminary demonstration of the existence of a gregarious instinct in man, Trotter takes up a consideration of some of the current notions regarding the nature and consequences of this gregarious instinct, as viewed by biologists, sociologists, and psychologists. He finds that Karl Pearson was the first to point out the deeper significance of the gregarious instinct in human evolution by indicating that by its operation the selective process was greatly modified within the group. The neglect of this consideration by Haeckel, Spencer, and Huxley had led them into many errors and perplexities. Lester F. Ward had seen fit to

¹ “Herd Instinct and Its Bearing upon the Psychology of Civilized Man,” in the *Sociological Review*, 1908, p. 227.

² *Ibid.*, p. 230.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 230–35.

designate this gregarious instinct as religion. Boris Sidis, at that time (1908), according to Trotter, had been about the only psychologist to investigate the importance of the gregarious instinct for that science. He disagrees with Sidis, in that he believes that the subconscious mind is a normal characteristic of man and that man is suggestible at all times, though in different degrees.¹

Dr. Trotter devotes the remainder of his first essay to a discussion of the more important deductions which may be drawn from the psychological characteristics of a gregarious animal, particularly man. The fundamental characteristic of the "herd" is homogeneity, to secure which the members must be very sensitive to the conduct of their fellow-members and restrain their behavior within the normal bounds of the herd customs. Those members whose originality is so great as to lead them to deviate widely from the norm of herd-conduct will be eliminated by natural selection, owing to the inability to exist without the aid of the herd, or by artificial selection resulting from the destruction of the innovator by the alarmed herd. The whole sum of life-experiences attaches the animal to the herd and its ways and makes its separation both physically dangerous and mentally intolerable. While the secondary impulses that arise from the operation of the herd instinct are not really instinctive, they act upon the mind with all the emotional value of an instinctive impulse, and make any criticism of such an impulse appear highly ridiculous and objectionable. The herd can thus confer the emotional sanction of instinctive behavior upon any field of action and thus enormously increase its coercive influence over the individual.²

The mental consequences of gregariousness are of the utmost significance in determining the psychic activities of the individual. The member of the herd feels comfortable, warm, and secure in the presence of the herd and equally uncomfortable and insecure in their absence. Each individual wants his opinions on all matters to receive the approbation of the herd, and if he cannot secure for them the sanction of the whole herd, he will seek that of a part of the herd. This is the root of the universal human tendency to

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 235-39, 243.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 239-41.

segregate into classes each distinguished by the cherishing of a certain type of opinion, for example, political, religious, and other parties. Minor manifestations of the action of the herd instinct are to be seen in the dislike of being too conspicuous, in shyness, and in stage-fright. Man is instinctively suggestible only to the impulses arising from the herd instinct. The history of the popular resistance to inventions shows that he is "notoriously insensitive to the suggestions of experience." There is an instinctive dislike of anything new or novel, as it runs counter to these herd opinions which are based upon older traditions. Hence the suggestions that conform most closely to herd habits will be most readily accepted, and Trotter justifies Machiavelli's psychology by pointing out that the successful innovator is the one who is wise enough to present his innovations under the disguise of the herd opinions. The invention of speech in the human race greatly increased the scope and intensity of the application of herd instinct. The result may be seen in the perfectly amazing tyranny of custom in primitive society.¹

This comfortable satisfaction of the herd in regard to its instinctive behavior and its aversion to anything that runs counter to its customary views is well illustrated by the history of science. It is hard for man to bear the suspense that science with its tentative hypotheses, imposes; the herd opinions have the merit of a confident assurance of certain and assumed, if not real, accuracy and finality. Therefore, the sciences have developed in the order in which their subject-matter least affects man's most important and sensitive activities and hence received the least resistance from the herd, namely, in the order of mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology, psychology, and sociology. The present opposition to the admission of sociology to the rank of a science arises because it upsets or threatens to discredit so many of the antiquated herd opinions.² Diplomacy, politics, and theology deal with such intimate fields of human conduct that they have not even yet reached the level of sciences, and we go on preferring

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 241-44.

² It would be interesting to inquire as to how far this is at the root of the academic opposition to sociology.

the comfortable but deluded certitude of herd opinion on those subjects.¹

That the majority of human opinions are merely the reflection of herd ideas and impulses and are not the result of scientific knowledge may easily be perceived by examining the "mental furniture of the average man."

He will have fairly settled ideas upon the origin and nature of the universe and upon what he will probably call its meaning; he will have conclusions as to what will happen to him at death and after, as to what is and what should be the basis of conduct; he will know how the country should be governed and why it is going to the dogs, and why this piece of legislation is good and that bad. He will have strong views upon military and naval strategy, the principles of taxation, the use of alcohol and vaccination, the treatment of influenza, the prevention of hydrophobia, upon municipal trading, the teaching of Greek, upon what is permissible in art, satisfactory in literature, and hopeful in science.²

Nothing could be more obvious than that no one person could arrive at all these opinions in a scientific manner, and most of them relate to problems which are admitted by experts to be far from settled or which are not amenable to scientific treatment. One may thus safely hold that the "wholesale acceptance of non-rational belief must be looked upon as normal."³

The holder of these varied opinions believes, however, that they are conspicuous for their rationality and he is equally convinced that opposing opinions are especially ridiculous, unreasonable and foolish. The atheist and the Christian are each held by the other to be superficial and stupid, and neither the Conservative nor the Liberal can for a moment comprehend how his opponent can be so totally averse to using even a modicum of reason.⁴ The obvious explanation of such misunderstanding is that these opinions are the result of different varieties of herd suggestion, and are, as a result, to the minds of their supporters rational almost beyond description. Since the mind likes to justify rationally these opinions which are unconsciously derived from herd suggestion,

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 244. Dr. Trotter's revision of Comte's famous explanation of the origin of the sciences is probably like Comte's only partially true, but a combination of the two explanations would appear to be a very plausible theory.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 244-45.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 245.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 245.

one can understand the common tendency to produce elaborately rationalized justifications for the most irrationally derived practices. This is the root of that ingenious process of secondary rationalization of subconsciously derived opinions which is perhaps the most characteristic element in the mental life of man:

This mechanism enables the English lady, who, to escape the stigma of having normal feet, subjects them to a formidable degree of lateral compression, to be aware of no logical inconsistency when she subscribes to missions to teach the Chinese lady how absurd it is to compress her feet longitudinally. . . . The process of rationalization which has just been illustrated by some of its simpler varieties is best seen on the largest scale, and in the most elaborate form in the pseudo-sciences of political economy and ethics. Both of these are occupied in deriving from eternal principles justification for masses of non-rational belief which are assumed to be permanent because they exist. Hence the notorious acrobatic feats of both in the face of any considerable variation in herd belief.¹

There is, fortunately, a compensating feature in the action of the herd instinct upon the individual mind. When herd suggestion happens to act in the behalf of a scientific truth which the herd has finally accepted after a generation or two of resistance, it becomes an overwhelming power in the spreading of this idea and in securing its acceptance. The popularization of science is accomplished in the following manner. A new discovery gains vogue among the group of specialists concerned, and the herd suggestion and coercion which begin in this relatively small group of experts spreads in successively larger circles until its adherents have come to embrace all of civilized humanity. The acceptance of the Copernican system and the gradual spread of Darwinism may be cited as illustrative examples of this method of the diffusion of science.²

The effects of herd suggestion are as important in matters of emotion as they are in the intellectual field. That the sense of conscience, guilt, and duty have their origin in the suggestion of the herd may be realized from the fact that none of these feelings are found in non-gregarious animals, that judgments of conscience on most subjects differ in various communities, and finally that these judgments of conscience are not usually advantageous to the

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 246-47.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 246-47.

species as a whole outside of the community in which they originate.¹

3. *Social and political consequences of the operation of herd instinct.*—In his second essay Dr. Trotter deduces the main sociological consequences which arise from the operation of the herd instinct.² It would be most valuable if man could be made to recognize the instinctive and non-rational basis of most of his convictions. He would then know that any belief or opinion, which was so charged with emotion as to make its criticism highly objectionable, is of purely instinctive origin and that it is not only likely to be erroneous but also harmful, since it stands in the way of progress toward the truth. Man has no such aversion to the criticism of those opinions which are based upon scientific investigation, but rather welcomes it as the means to improving his knowledge.³ It is highly erroneous, however, to attempt to eradicate the evil effects of herd suggestion by seeking to destroy gregariousness, even if that were possible. Man's inclination toward a social life is the main bulkwark of social cohesion and progress.

The solution would seem rather to lie in making it certain that suggestion always acts on the side of reason; if rationality were once to become really respectable, if we feared the entertaining of an unverifiable opinion with the warmth with which we fear using the wrong implement at the dinner table, if the thought of holding a prejudice disgusted us as a foul disease, then the dangers of man's suggestibility would be turned into advantages.⁴

Not only does herd suggestion have a perverting effect upon the accuracy of the opinions entertained by mankind, but it also materially modifies the nature and extent of that altruism of which Spencer wrote so eloquently and to which Drummond ascribed the main credit for the evolution of the race. While altruism is a normal and natural product of herd suggestion, at the same time

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 246-48.

² He states at the outset that it is imperative that some sort of accurate statistical measurement be made of the nature and extent of human suggestibility, so that the discussion of the subject can be put on a quantitative basis, "Sociological Application of the Psychology of Herd Instinct," in the *Sociological Review* (1909), pp. 36-37.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

the herd limits the possible extent of altruism, since one who becomes too altruistic is exterminated as an innovator:

When we remember the fearful repressing force which society has always exerted on altruism, and how constantly the dungeon, the scaffold, and the cross have been the reward of the altruist, we are able to get some conception of the force of the instinctive impulse which has triumphantly defied these terrors, and to appreciate in some slight degree how irresistible an enthusiasm it might become if it were encouraged by the unanimous voice of the herd.¹

But the most important of all the sociological applications of the psychology of herd instinct arises from the conflict which develops between the herd instinct and the primary instincts of self-preservation, food, and sex.² The three primary instincts do not normally conflict directly with each other; they are of temporary duration and periodic action, and are highly charged with emotional satisfaction. If man were guided by the impulses arising from these three instincts alone he "would lead a life emotionally quite simple, for at any given moment he would necessarily be doing what he most wanted to. We may therefore imagine him to be endowed with the feeling of free-will and reality to a superb degree, wholly unperplexed by doubt, and wholly secure in his unity of purpose."³ The herd instinct, however, which guides and orders the life of the individual, controls his conduct from without and he does not act wholly in response to the dictates of his own instincts. The herd instinct is able, as we have seen, to give instinctive force to many human actions not at all necessarily pleasant or really instinctive. Hence there arises that most momentous of all mental conflicts—that between man's instinctive desires and the quasi-instinctive coercion of herd suggestion.⁴ Thus "duty has first appeared in the world, and with it the age-long conflict which is described in the memorable words of St. Paul, 'I delight in the law of God after the inward man, but I see another law in my members warring against the law of

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 39 ff.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 40. According to Trotter's deductions, therefore, Rousseau's imaginary picture of the care-free life of the non-gregarious primitive man who fulfilled only the demands of his three primary instincts may have been, on the whole, quite accurate.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.'"¹

The consequences of this conflict between the primary instincts and the instinct of the herd are many and far-reaching. The child with certain important instincts partially undeveloped, and being generally forgetful of experience, can see his lying chum have a better time and yet be consoled by the admonition of his parents that veracity is the chief virtue of life. When in adolescence, however, the primary instincts are fully awakened and the youth finds their outlet blocked by the domination of herd opinion and suggestion, there then arises that tremendous mental conflict which renders that period of life the most precarious in the whole psychic history of the individual. It is over religion and sex that this conflict centers, though it extends to every other field of conduct. The so-called religious instinct is a derivative of the herd instinct. The latter originates that basic psychic element in religion, namely, that desire to be in mystic harmony and unity with the infinite. It is the same psychic mechanism which makes the company of the master to the dog what "walking with God in the cool of the evening" is to man.² Sex is even more a source of mental conflict than religion, for it has a tremendous driving power, is connected closely with its derivative impulse, that of altruism, and is most rigidly restrained and tabooed by herd opinion.³

This mental conflict between the primary instincts and the herd instinct is usually carried over into adult life, and the final issue of this prolonged conflict may be of four possible types. In the first type, the desires at the bottom of the conflict may be automatically eradicated by later experiences. In the second, the person may by exceptional skepticism become aware of the irrationality of the herd impulses and ignore them. In the third, the person may indulge his desires and then rationalize the matter and justify his opposition to the herd by a subsequent contribution

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 40-41.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42. Modern dynamic psychology has, however, shown that religion is in part a derivative of the filial emotions. Cf. W. S. Swisher, *Religion and the New Psychology*.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-43.

to religious and charitable agencies—a sort of psychic compensation; or the individual may agree that the herd opinion is right, assent to its mandates, and relinquish his desires. The fourth type consists of those individuals who are not able to get rid of their conflict in any of these ways and in whose mind the conflicting impulses persist.¹

The great majority of those who rid their minds of conflict are of the first and third types, and these make up the great mass of normal individuals in society who are the defenders of the rationality of the herd impulses and suggestions, resistive to the lessons which experience should teach and to the changes which experience suggests. The only value of this class in society is the cohesion and stability which it imparts to the group. This class was never known to contribute a whit to progress or original thought, and if it had always dominated society in every circumstance man would have remained forever in the Stone Age.²

This triumph of herd suggestion over experience and over altruism has clearly the advantage of establishing existing society with great firmness, but it has also the consequence of entrusting the conduct of the state and the attitude of it towards life to a class which their very stability shows to possess a certain relative incapacity to take experience seriously, a certain relative insensibility to the value of feeling and to suffering, and a decided preference for herd tradition over all other sources of conduct.³

This stable mediocre class, which makes up the mass of society, constituted almost the entire body of society in primitive times and is still in control of modern governments. While the control of political organization by such a class might have been fairly satisfactory for a static society which existed before the modern period, its persistence as the controlling agency in a dynamic civilization is probably our most serious social problem. "It is this survival so to say, of the waggoner upon the footplate of the express-engine which has made the modern history of nations a series of hair-breadth escapes."⁴

The class in whose minds the conflict created by the clash between native instincts and herd instinct persists⁵ makes up

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 43-44.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁵ Dr. Trotter does not discuss the nature and contributions of the class which ends the conflict by skepticism; it is perhaps to be inferred that they constitute the mentally elite—the true social and intellectual aristocracy.

most of the other great body of citizens and is distinguished by relatively keen sensitiveness to experience, and by mental instability, in contrast to the imperviousness to experience and the mental inertia manifested by the class just described. This mentally unstable class holds within it every type from that of the transcendent but eccentric genius to that portion of the insane whose abnormality rests upon no organic defect. It contains most of the so-called abnormal classes, the criminal and the vicious; and there is every reason to suppose that vice is but an avenue of escape from the tortures of mental conflicts, and that crime is normally the behavior of the person whose mental stability has been overthrown by the same disturbing clash of desires and impulses.¹

While both the stable and the unstable classes are dangerous to society, the latter is the most menacing group, for it is very rapidly increasing with the growing volume of new stimulation which has resulted from the vast transformation in civilization in the last generation or two. Since it is the conflict between experience and the suggestions of the herd which creates this class, it was but natural that the greatly increased stream of experience in recent times should have borne its unfortunate fruit in this amazing increase of mental instability.² The main "rift in the clouds" is to be discovered in the fact that the growth of this class may be prevented in such a way that society may retain its invaluable mental powers and high sensibility to the lessons of experience and yet have these capabilities unimpaired by the disintegrating effect of conflict.³ The method by which this indispensable result may be accomplished is so to arrange it that herd suggestion may be enlisted on the side of reason and experience and hence end the conflict and its detrimental results.⁴ But the difficulties inherent in the remedy and the lack of evidence that we are making any progress toward its utilization leads Dr. Trotter to close with the rather pessimistic paragraph which challenges the attention of every thinking person:

We see man today, instead of the frank and courageous recognition of his status, the docile attention to his biological history, the determination to

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 46-48.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 49 ff.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 51-53.

let nothing stand in the way of the security and permanence of his future, which alone can establish the safety and happiness of the race, substituting blind confidence in his destiny, unclouded faith in the essentially respectful attitude of the universe toward his moral code, and a belief no less firm that his traditions and laws and institutions necessarily contain certain permanent qualities of reality. Living as he does in a world where outside his race no allowances are made for infirmity, and where figments, however beautiful, never become facts, it needs but little imagination to see that the probabilities are very great that after all man will prove but one more of Nature's failures, ignominiously to be swept from her work-table to make way for another venture of her tireless curiosity and patience.¹

4. *Application of the psychology of herd instinct to the world-war and problems of reconstruction.*—In 1915 Dr. Trotter reprinted the two essays analyzed above in a work entitled *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War*. To his earlier essays was added a longer one dealing with the relation of herd instinct to the causes and progress of the war and entitled "Speculations on the Human Mind in 1915." Finally, in 1919, he brought out a new edition adding a postscript on the relation of his psychological concepts to the problems of social and political reconstruction.²

Before dealing specifically with the psychology of the war Trotter summarizes the traits of man which grow out of his gregariousness, and criticizes the biological doctrine that war is a powerful factor in producing social progress. He finds that man "is intolerant and fearful of solitude, physical, or mental; is more sensitive to the voice of the herd than to any other influence; is subject to the passions of the pack in his mob violence and the passions of the herd in his panics; is remarkably susceptible to leadership; and his relations with his fellows are dependent upon the recognition of him as a member of the herd."³ The doctrine of the biological necessity and advantages of war is found to be "open to strong suspicion on theoretical grounds as being contrary to the evolutionary tendency already plainly marked out for the human species."⁴

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

² In this work he acknowledges his indebtedness to Freudian psychology, something which was only to be inferred from his earlier writings.

³ *Op. cit.*, pp. 112-20.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 126-32.

Turning to a specific discussion of the psychological lessons to be drawn from the world-war Trotter finds that its fundamental cause lay in the fact that society was controlled by that great stable class which is guided almost entirely by herd instinct and scarcely at all by intelligence and originality. It was a basic defect in modern civilization rather than the perversity of rulers or diplomats that produced the war:

The present European war is an example on the greatest possible scale of the kind of price the race has to pay for the way in which minds and temperaments are selected by its society. . . . It is almost certainly not the case that the war could have been avoided by those immediately concerned. The war was the consequence of the inherent defects in the evolution of civilized life; it was the consequence of human progress being left to chance, and to the interaction of the heterogeneous influences which necessarily arise within a gregarious unit whose individual members have a large power of varied reaction. In such an atmosphere minds essentially resistive alone can flourish and attain to power, and they are by their very qualities incapable of grasping the necessities of government or translating them into action.¹

The characteristics of man, as dominated by herd instinct, come most clearly to the front in such a crisis as the war. The common danger—an age-long stimulus to extreme group-unity—arouses the herd instinct and makes the individual highly suggestible and accessible to all threats and commands coming from his group and alert to detect and resist all threats made against his society by outsiders. There is even less than a normal concern about verifiable truth and an abnormal susceptibility to rumor. Yet this vastly heightened operation of herd instinct is in some ways an indispensable aid in time of war; the homogeneity of national sentiment which it produces is the chief source of strength in a warring state and the basis of morale.² Yet it has one serious drawback, in addition to the increase of prejudice and the submergence of reason, namely, that it insures and perpetuates the domination of the non intelligent and unoriginal element in society at a time when intelligent leadership is more than ever needed:

The class of mind to which power in society gravitates I have ventured to describe as the stable type. Its characteristics are vigor and resistiveness,

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 134, 162.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 139 ff. Cf. G. S. Hall, *Morale, the Supreme Standard of Life and Conduct*.

accessibility to the voice of the herd and resistiveness to and even horror of the new in feeling and experience. The predominance of this type has been rigorously maintained throughout the war. This is why the war has been fought with a mere modicum of help from the human intellect.¹

Trotter finds that in its most fundamental sense the war was a struggle between two different types of gregariousness—the aggressive gregariousness of the wolf, as represented by Germany, and the higher and more complex socialized gregariousness of the ant and the bee, as exemplified by England. The lupine gregariousness possesses certain advantages for war, in that it is rapidly evolved and functions well for aggression, but it is essentially a lower form of gregariousness and utterly unfitted for producing the higher values of life. Had it prevailed in the war the outlook for civilization would be dark, indeed, but after a narrow escape the English type conquered in the great test and humanity has been given one more opportunity to save itself from destruction by perfecting the socialized type of gregariousness and bringing it under rational control and direction.²

In his postscript to the latest edition of his work Trotter discusses the psychological aspects of the problem of reconstruction after the war. He points out the many serious psychological difficulties involved, especially the deep-seated prejudices and bias developed during the war, the passing of the circumstances and organization which brought unity and morale to the warring states, the resulting moral and social instability, and, finally, the fact that class segregation will once more begin to operate in the place of national unity.³ But much more significant than all of these is the chief thesis which he makes in this section of his work, namely, that the war was only a symptom of general defects in social organization and social functioning, and that neither war nor the other evils of modern civilization can be solved without removing these basic social and psychological defects:

Great efforts are being made at present to establish conditions which will prevent future wars. Such efforts are entirely admirable, but it must be remembered that after all war is no more than a symptom of social defects.

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 239. Cf. H. M. Kallen, in *Encyclopedia Americana*, XXVIII, 655-58.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 156 ff., 232-33.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 214 ff.

If, therefore, war as a symptom is merely suppressed, valuable as that will be in controlling the waste and destruction of life and effort, indeed indispensable to any kind of vigorous mental life, it may leave untouched potentialities of disaster comparable even with war itself.¹

The two great defects of modern society, which were clearly revealed by pre-war conditions and confirmed by the events of the war, are the prevalence of class-segregation and selfishness and the control of society by the element in society most dominated by herd instinct, and that not the "herd" represented by the state as a whole but rather that of the governing class itself. This leaves society without any conscious and intelligent direction of its present procedure or future destiny. In short, Trotter does not desire the suppression of herd instinct, but rather hopes to make it embrace the whole nation, so as to bring social solidarity, and holds that it must also be brought under the control of the intelligent and original minds in the community. In a characteristic passage he criticizes the detrimental effect of class segregation:

Class segregation has come to be regarded as a necessary and inevitable part of the structure of society. Telling as it does much more in the favor of certain classes than others, it has come to be defended by a whole series of legal and moral principles invented for the purpose, and by arguments that to objective examination are no more than rationalized prejudice. The maintenance of the social system—that is, of the segregation of power and prestige, of ease and leisure, and of the corresponding segregations of labor, privation and poverty—depends upon an enormously elaborate system of rationalization, tradition and morals, and upon almost innumerable indirect mechanisms ranging from the drugging of society with alcohol to the distortion of religious principle in the interests of the established order. To the biologist the whole immensely intricate system is a means for combating the slow, almost imperceptible, pressure of Nature in the direction of a true national homogeneity. That this must be attained if human progress is to continue is, and has long been, obvious. The further fact that it can be attained only by a radical change in the whole human attitude towards society is but barely emerging from obscurity.²

Nothing less than complete social solidarity can furnish the biological and psychological basis of social adjustment:

The whole national body is in the present state of society the smallest unit in which the individual can find complete and permanent satisfaction.

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 239.

² *Ibid.*, p. 138; cf. pp. 155, 215, 237-38, 253.

As long as the average man's sense of possession in the state is kept so low as it is at present, as long as the sense of moral inequality between himself and his fellows is so vigorously maintained, so long will he continue to make his class rather than his nation the object of social passion, and so long will society continue to breed within itself a principle of death.¹

Trotter's views regarding the incompetence of the present dominating majority of stable minds to direct society have been presented above and need not be repeated at this point.

The elimination of these threatening defects in modern society is the task of an intelligent statecraft based on the best modern biological, psychological, and sociological knowledge. Such attempts have been made in the past, but they have not been conducted honestly, but rather in the interest of a specific class theory or policy:

Many attempts have been made to apply biological principles to the interpretation of history and the guidance of statecraft, especially since the popularization of the principles associated with the name of Darwin. Such attempts have generally been undertaken less in the spirit of the scientific investigator than in that of the politician; the point of departure has been a political conviction and not a biological truth; and as might be expected, when there has been any conflict between political conviction and biological truth it has been the latter that has had to give way.²

Yet past failures should not prevent the adoption of a scientific statecraft, for this is the only hope of achieving permanent social progress:

It has already been repeatedly suggested that the difficulties of modern society can be met only by the interposition of the intellect as an active factor in the problem of the direction of society. In other words, the progressive evolution of society has reached a point where the construction and use of a scientific statecraft will become an indispensable factor in further development and the only means of arresting the dreary oscillations between progress and relapse which have been so ominous a feature in human history.³

Such a scientific statecraft as Trotter demands would have to recognize man's real biological nature and position, with its sociological implications; the instinctive nature of a great field of

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 253. This is, of course, exactly the opposite of the doctrine of Durkheim and of those who propose the reconstruction of government upon the basis of professional groupings. It also conflicts with certain phases of Dr. Trotter's own argument.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 99-100.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 251-52.

human action and the necessity of an adequate instinctive expression for a healthy individual or social organism; the dangers of class differentiation and selfishness; and the necessity of providing the best constructive leadership. This leadership must not be one which, as formerly in Germany, is superimposed or too artificially selected, but must rest upon the spontaneous and voluntary submission of society to the truly superior minds in the community.¹ Trotter, therefore, comes out at the point reached by Hobhouse and Ward, namely, that however important and powerful is the influence of instinct in society, it is an unsafe guide for human conduct, and social progress will only be assured by putting society under the control of the conscious direction of the intellectual factors and forces.

In the following section Trotter admirably summarizes his very fruitful social philosophy:

All societies of which we have any knowledge have shown two general defects—they have proved unable to develop and direct more than a small fraction of the resources they theoretically possess, and they have been impermanent, so that time after time laborious accumulations of constructive effort have been wasted. According to our analysis these defects are due to the drift of power into the hands of the stable-minded class, and to the derivation of moral power and enterprise from the mechanisms of leadership and class segregation.

A society, in order to have stability and full functional effectiveness, must be capable of a continually progressive absorption of its individual members into the general body—an uninterrupted movement towards a complete moral homogeneity.

A tendency towards a progressive integration of this kind can be detected in society today by direct observation. It is weak and its effects are fluctuating so that there is doubt whether it can, unless directly encouraged by human effort, counteract the forces which up to now have always limited social evolution to movements of oscillation rather than of true progress.

The only way in which society can be made safe from disruption or decay is by the intervention of the conscious and instructed intellect as a factor among the forces ruling its development.²

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 247-54.

² *Ibid.*, p. 255. Trotter's closing paragraph, p. 259, is nearly as alarmist in tone as that which closed his second original essay.